

To
Members of the Instructional Quality Commission
1430 N St, Sacramento, CA 95814

Date
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From
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Hello, My name is Sharat Joshi, I'm a concerned parent of 2 Elementary School-going kids from Cupertino. I participated in the Public Hearing on Jan 22nd 2016 in Sacramento.

After the hearing I was asked to share my speech so that it could be circulated among the Commission's members for action.

I am herewith attaching my thoughts in writing in the hope of getting the Right Facts represented on Hinduism in California Textbooks.

I remember from last hearing that Commissioner Bill Honig said that "Social structure is part of history and hence could not be removed"

Well if so, Do a meaningful and proportionate portrayal.

The way it is done now, is increasing a problem we have been asking the Commission to fix.

To give an analogy, let us imagine a hypothetical scenario when Standards call for Automobile to be presented to kids as 20th Century's Important Invention. You can do this in two ways...

The framework could say...

A machine was invented that revolutionized transportation and changed the way people and goods could be transported around the world !

OR

It could say...

Automobile was the cause of many wars fought in the middle east over Oil resulting in avoidable loss of lives. Automobile was also responsible for the greatest ecological damage on planet earth - causing large swaths of toxic layers of chemicals impervious to the climate and even poisoning groundwater. This machine also led to thinning of Ozone layer.

When it comes to Indian Social Structure, - it's portrayed as causing a destructive influence. BUT Christian, Jewish and Islamic contributions are shown as beacons of hope and improvement in people's lives.

California State Law's Education Code sections like 51501, 60040 through 60044, 60048 and 60200, clearly state that every child should feel pride in their heritage and no religion shall be represented in a fashion that would adversely affect its practitioners.

Why is that, the YARDSTICK's different in case of Hinduism ?

I am asking to shine a fair light on Hinduism, in line with laws, and yardstick used for other religions.

I ask you to either remove the entire social structure, for 6th grade framework line #874 to #893, or accept the Social Structure edits provided by Tushar Pandya.

Isn't it ironic that, If it has taken the Commission this long and STILL NOT get it right !
How can you expect a 6th grade kid to get the Caste system, so simply drop it completely.

The mind space of little kids is already tiny and instead of seeding them with positive ideas of each Religion and enhancing Positive Thinking we are sowing seeds of despair and rejection among them ? That too for a religion that's extremely Pluralistic, Accommodative and Universalistic in its teaching is very Unfair and Illegal.

I urge the Commission to take its role and responsibility seriously and do justice to Hinduism and represent it in accordance with the Laws enshrined in California's Education Code.

Thank You
Sharat Joshi